

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 588

By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Ray Mears.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Ray Mears; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mears was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mears served with acumen and alacrity as the basketball coach for the University of Tennessee, in which position he earned the respect of his peers and players alike for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, born in Dover, Ohio, and a graduate of Miami University, Ray Mears began his stellar basketball career with an NCAA college-division title at Wittenberg University; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, he was hired at the University of Tennessee (UT); his first season there, the team finished with a record of 13-11; and

WHEREAS, during his impressive tenure, the UT Vols pulled off a number of remarkable upsets, including one over unbeaten, top-ranked Kentucky in 1966 and one over top-ranked South Carolina in 1969; and

WHEREAS, the 1966-67 season was an eventful one for Coach Mears and the Vols, who won their first SEC title since 1945 and played in the schools first NCAA tournament game; Coach Mears was named SEC Coach of the Year that season, a fitting tribute to his dedication to the pursuit of excellence; and

WHEREAS, other highlights of this remarkable career include the Vols sharing the SEC title in 1972 and 1977 and beating Temple 11-6 in 1973; Coach Mears again gained Coach of the Year honors during the 1976-77 season; and

WHEREAS, though he left UT in 1977, Coach Mears went on to serve as Athletic Director of the University of Tennessee at Martin from 1980 until 1989; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to accolades, Ray Mears was inducted into the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame in 1985, and attended the UT-Kentucky game to see his banner hung in the Thompson-Boling Arena in 2006; and

WHEREAS, always striving to give back to his community, Coach Mears, along with his wife, Dana, initiated the Ray and Dana Mears Basketball Athletic Scholarship in 2003; and

WHEREAS, Coach Mears was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Ray Mears leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of former University of Tennessee basketball coach Ray Mears, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Mears.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.